Vol. VIII. Numb. 53

THE OBSERVATOR.

On the News of the King of Sweden's *being defeated, with Remarks upon his Conduct, and the Conſequences of it to the Alliance and the Proteſtant Intereſt. On the Hardſhips put on the Proteſtants of* Sileſia, *contrary to Treaty, and the Emperor's Conduct in that Matter. The Advantage the Papiſts have over the Proteſtants, by having a common Head to have Recourſe to on all Occaſions; and the Reaſons that hinder our Government to be the common Head of all Proteſtants.*

From Saturday, July 30. to Wednesday, Auguſt 3. 1709.

Country-m. I Have ſtrange News to tell you, Maſter, from the *North*. The Czar of *Muſcovy*, as our publick Prints, and the *Dutch Gazettes* inform us, has ſent an Account to one of his Miniſters in *Germany*, and ſeveral Expreſſes to King *Auguſtus*, that the *Swediſh* Army is entirely defeated, moſt of his Generals taken, and that 'tis not certain whether the King himſelf be dead or alive; at the ſame Time the *Swediſh* Envoy at *Berlin* tells juſt the Reverſe, that his Maſter has taken the Town of *Poltowa*, and defeated the *Muſcovite* Infantry. Pray, Maſter, what do you think of that News?

Obſ. The News from that Part of the World has been ſo uncertain, and full of Contradictions for a long Time, *Roger*, that there's no depending upon it. However, 'tis my Opinion, that the Information of the *Swediſh* Miniſter is not ſufficient to ballance the Letter of the Czar, if it be really his; for we cannot think, that ſo great a Prince would expoſe himſelf by writing a Falſhood of that Conſequence, becauſe 'twould turn ſo much to his Diſgrace, ſhould it prove to be ſo. On the other Hand, we have had ſo many Accounts of Victories obtain'd over the *Swedes*, that had they been true, they muſt have been entirely ruin'd long ago, and nothing could have hinder'd the tranſmitting of a full Account of it hither; for the King of *Sweden*'s Enemies being poſſeſs'd of moſt of the Country on this Side of his Army, it makes the Paſſage of News from them very eaſy, but that of Expreſſes from him, very difficult, ſo that we muſt wait for a Confirmation, before we can form a right Judgment upon what is advanc'd on either Side.

Country-m. I cannot forbear, however it be, Maſter, to expreſs my Sorrow for the King of *Sweden*, becauſe King *William* call'd him the *growing Hopes of Europe*, becauſe of the Character he has for Piety, and becauſe of what he did for the Proteſtants of *Sileſia*.

Obſ. I muſt own I have a Reſpect for him on the ſame Account, *Roger*; but at the ſame Time, as Things have been repreſented to us in the publick Papers, he ſeem'd to have puſh'd his Point too far againſt King *Auguſtus*, to have impos'd too hard Terms upon him, and to have too much exhauſted his Proteſtant Dominions of *Saxony*, which was one of the richeſt and moſt flouriſhing Countries of the Empire; the Conſequence of which, muſt be the weakening of the Proteſtant Intereſt in *Germany*. Beſides, *Roger*, 'twas a mighty Hinderance to the Confederate Arms, and kept a great Body of *Saxon* Troops from being imploy'd againſt *France*; for tho' I don't approve of King *Auguſtus*'s Apoſtacy, yet it muſt be own'd, that he has been very hearty in the Confederacy, and might have done them more Service, had it not been for that Diverſion; which was ſo much the leſs to be excus'd in the King of *Sweden*, becauſe King *Auguſtus* was willing to have come to any reaſonable Terms, rather than have quitted the Crown of *Poland*; and I ſuppoſe it can't well be deny'd, that tho' he purchas'd it at too dear a Rate, yet it was for the Intereſt of the Confederates that he ſhould rather have had it, than the Prince of *Conti*, who, had he obtain'd his Aim, would have been a terrible Thorn in the Side of the Confederates. I am likewiſe afraid, *Roger*, that the King of *Sweden* miſs'd his Opportunity of making honourable Terms with the Czar. Nor can it be deny'd, that had he join'd the Confederates, he might have found a much larger Field for exerting his Zeal in Behalf of the Proteſtant Intereſt againſt the Family of *Bourbon*; which is the ſworn Enemy of the Reformation, and has done the Proteſtants more Hurt, than ever the Houſe of *Auſtria* was able to do.

But further, *Roger*, the King of *Sweden* had very juſt Cauſe to have join'd againſt *France* for the notorious Infractions that Crown had made, and occaſion'd to be made upon the Treaty of *Weſtphalia*, as to the Point of Religion, which was chiefly procur'd by the Arms of *Guſtavus Adolphus*, the King of *Sweden*'s glorious Predeceſſor; conſidering alſo the barbarous Devaſtations of the *Palatinate* by the *French*, their Hoſtilities upon his own Territories of *Deux Ponts*, and the inhuman Treatment of the Aſhes of the deceas'd Elector *Palatine*, by deſtroying their Monuments, and kicking about the Corps of thoſe noble Princes, from whom the King of *Sweden* is deſcended, and in Defence of whom, the Great *Guſtavus*, formerly mention'd, took Arms.

Country-m. I can't ſay but you are much in the Right, Maſter; for though King *Auguſtus*, and the Czar gave the King of *Sweden* juſt Provocation, by being the firſt Aggreſſors, yet Reſentments may be carry'd too far, and I wiſh the King of *Sweden* do not ſmart for it.

Obſ. I am ſorry, *Roger*, that by the Loſs he has ſuſtain'd, the Proteſtant Intereſt in his own native Country, and his Dominions in *Germany* is alſo weaken'd; whereas, it might have been ſtrengthen'd in both, had he join'd the Confederacy; for then he might have been the common Champion of the Reformation in *Germany*, and have procur'd good Terms for the Proteſtants in *Hungary*; towards whom, we find, by the publick Accounts, that the bigotted Faction at the Court of *Vienna*, and the Intereſt of the Jeſuiſts, which has, for a long Time, been too prevalent there, have not only hinder'd the Emperor to exert his innate Clemency to the *Hungarian* Proteſtants, but alſo have put him upon acting contrary to the Treaty of *Alt Ranſtat*, with Reſpect to the Proteſtants of *Sileſia*; which I am afraid the King of *Sweden*, by his too great Ardor and Forwardneſs, has put himſelf out of a Condition to retrieve.

Country-m. You had a Letter ſome Time ago from a Gentleman, Maſter, who deſir'd you to take Notice of the Hardſhips put upon the Proteſtants of *Sileſia*, contrary to the Treaty; and I have frequently wonder'd at your keeping Silence ſo long on that Head.

Obſ. The Truth is, *Roger*, I can't well tell what to ſay to it; for, on the one Hand, I pity the Emperor's Circumſtances; you ſee how he has been treated by the Pope, and libell'd by his own bi-

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gotted Faction of the Jesuits, as a Favourer of the Protestants. His Generals have been excommunicated by the Court of *Rome*, as if they were actually what that Church calls Hereticks. His Brother, K. *Charles*, is by the Intriegues of the *French* Court, made odious to the bigotted *Spaniards* on that Account. And, on the other Hand, our unnatural Faction at Home, are continually stunning the Emperor and other Popish Powers with a Noise, that we have broke the Capitulation of *Limerick*, in Relation to the *Irish* Papists; which, though they be ill founded Calumnies, and that our Conduct against the Papists of *Ireland*, who are in the Pretender's Interest, is sufficiently justify'd by that, and their Readiness on all Occasions to cut the Throats of the Protestants, and to destroy the *British* Interest in that Kingdom, yet those false Representations have an Influence at Popish Courts; and what lessens the Weight of all our Remonstrances and Memorials, especially in behalf of the *Calvinists* in *Silesia* and elsewhere, is, the Bigotry of a Faction among ourselves, who have got a Mark of Disgrace fix'd upon those of the same Principles at Home: and though they are so very considerable of themselves in *England* and *Ireland*, have merited so well of the Government, and have the publick Establishment in *Scotland*, yet you see they are branded by a publick Law, which puts an Objection to the Favour we desire for *Calvinists* Abroad in the Mouths of Popish Princes, that I fancy our Ministers have much ado to answer. So that upon the whole, *Roger*, 'till our Government be put in a Capacity to remove this Objection, they can never be in a Condition to act as Head of the Protestant Interest, to interpose effectually in their behalf, or to be consider'd by them as their natural and proper Guardians, so long as the Acts for Re-ordination and imposing the Sacramental Test, continue unrepeal'd; for as those Things strengthen the Hands of the Papists at Home and Abroad, they give foreign Protestants a strange Idea of us, that we should insist such Acts to continue in Force, as brand the far greatest Part of Protestants with the odious Character of Schismaticks.

Country m. That is what our bigotted Party can never answer to God or the Nation, Matter Common Policy, as well as Religion, would teach them contrary Measures, had they the Wisdom to listen to either.

Obs. You say very well, *Roger*. That which gives the Papists a mighty Advantage over the Protestants, is, that the former have a fix'd and certain Head, who protects and assists them all over the World; and to him they have Recourse in all Exigencies. The Pope, or rather the See of *Rome*, is the Center of their Union; and tho' their Differences among themselves be greater and more numerous, and punish'd with more, or at least as much Acrimony as those among Protestants, the Pope and his Conclave are so politick as to keep all of 'em within the Pale of their Church; and to the Shame of our high-flying Protestants, don't narrow the Terms of Communion, so as to throw any of them out; nor are their different Opinions an Obstruction to the civil Preferment of any Lay-man of this or that Sect. Therefore, in order to counter-ballance that Advantage, it follows naturally, that Protestant Princes and States should take Care that no Protestants who agree in the establish'd Doctrine of their respective Dominions, should, for their Differences in other Things, be made uncapable of civil Preferment, that there should be a mutual Forbearance of one another in those minute Differences, and no other Terms of Communion impos'd upon any, but those that are the reveal'd Terms of Salvation. There is no reform'd Nation in the World so guilty of that, as *England* and *Ireland*; therefore 'tis our Interest more than others to beware of it, especially considering how much we have suffer'd by it. Tho' the Principles of the Reformation are so noble and sublime, that they will not allow us to look for a spiritual Head any lower than Heaven, it does not therefore follow, but Protestants may agree upon a common Protector and civil Head upon Earth. This falls naturally upon the Government of our Island; but as I have said before, they can never throughly perform it, so long as there are Laws in Being, which makes them only King or Queen of a Faction, and deprive them of the Service of so great a Body of their Protestant Subjects, as the *Calvinists* are known to be; for as that weakens their Hands at Home, it very much lessens their Interest Abroad, and abates that intire Confidence which foreign Protestants would otherwise have in them. Therefore I leave it to the Consideration of any thinking Man, *Roger*, whether our violent Faction don't stand in the Way of her Majesty's Glory, by hindering the Repeal of those Laws, since 'twould advance her Interest and Influence more in the Protestant World, than all the Victories she can procure by her Arms, will ever be able to do; for that would center the Affections of all the reform'd in *Europe* in her Majesty's Person, as their Head under God.

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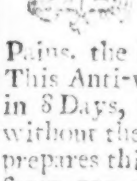

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